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SUMMARY: THE 4 MARCH 1973 ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN CHILE IS APPROACHING ITS END WITH A TYPICAL LAST MINUTE FLURRY OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY. TWO OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES HAVE SCHEDULED POLITICAL RALLIES ON 28 FEBRUARY AND 1 MARCH, RESPECTIVELY, WHILE

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A COMBINED POPULAR UNITY (U.P.) DEMONSTRATION IS TO BE HELD ON 2 MARCH. INCIDENTS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE, WHICH APPEARED TO BE DECLINING SUBSEQUENT TO 19 FEBRUARY, TOOK A SHARP UPSWING AS OF 27 FEBRUARY. THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION PARTIES REMAIN CONFIDENT OF A STRONG SHOWING IN THE ELECTIONS, PREDICTING FOR THE MOST PART A RANGE OF 62 TO 64 PERCENT FOR THE OPPOSITION VERSUS 36 TO 38 PERCENT FOR THE U.P. ESTIMATES FROM THE GOVERNMENT SIDE RANGE FROM CLAIMS OF 38 TO 42 PERCENT FOR THE U.P. TO THE ALARMIST CONCERN BY THE CHRISTIAN LEFT (IC) OF AN OPPOSITION LANDSLIDE. IT IS JUDGED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN STRATEGY OF MAKING AVAILABLE QUANTITIES OF SCARCE FOOD ITEMS FOR ELECTORAL IMPACT HAS BEEN LARGELY INEFFECTIVE. FURTHER, THE STRONG ATTACK BY THE OPPOSITION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S BILL TO INCREASE SALARIES TO COVER COST OF LIVING INCREASES IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BLUNTED POSSIBLE ELECTORAL BENEFITS FOR THE GOVERNMENT FROM THIS MEASURE. HOWEVER, THE EXTENT OF POSSIBLE EROSION OF U.P. ELECTORAL STRENGTH AS A RESULT OF SHORTAGES AND INFLATION, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE LOWER ECONOMIC SECTORS, CANNOT BE ACCURATELY JUDGED ON THE BASIS OF AVAILABLE DATA. ALSO, THE IMPACT OF THE NEW VOTERS (ILLITERATES AND THOSE UNDER 21 YEARS

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OF AGE) ON THE ELECTION OUTCOME CANNOT BE DETERMINED. WHILE IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT THE EROSION OF THE U.P.'S ELECTORAL POSITION HAS BEEN AS SEVERE AS THAT FEARED BY THE IC, IT IS JUDGED THAT A RANGE OF 62 TO 38 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE OPPOSITION, PLUS OR MINUS TWO PERCENT, WOULD BE A MORE REASONED ESTIMATE OF THE ELECTORAL OUTCOME BASED ON THE AVAILABLE INFORMATION. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE 4 MARCH 1973 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS IN CHILE IS APPROACHING ITS END, VERY PROBABLY MUCH TO THE RELIEF OF A PROPAGANDA-SATURATED PUBLIC. CHILE HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING A HIGHLY POLITICIZED COUNTRY WITH POLITICS AS ITS NATIONAL PASTIME. NONETHELESS, THE MARCH 1973 ELECTIONS HAVE PROVOKED MORE INTEREST AND MORE COMMENTARY AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAN EVEN THE TRADITIONALLY HIGH CHILEAN NORM. EVENTS IN CHILE SINCE THE ELECTION OF MARXIST PRESIDENT SALVADOR A L L E N D E IN SEPTEMBER 1970 HAVE LED TO A POLARIZATION OF THE CHILEAN ELECTORATE INTO PRO- AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT SECTORS, AND THE MARCH ELECTIONS WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE ELECTORATE TO JUDGE U.P. POLICIES AND PERFORMANCE AND PROVIDE A REFLECTION OF RESPECTIVE STRENGTHS OF EACH SECTOR. WHILE BOTH THE OPPOSITION

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AND GOVERNMENT POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE USED IDEOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS TO SUPPORT THEIR CAMPAIGNS, IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE OUTCOME WILL BE DETERMINED LARGELY BY VOTER REACTIONS TO BASIC ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.

3. THE CAMPAIGN IS ENDING AMID THE TRADITIONAL LAST MINUTE FLURRY OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY, AS THE DIFFERENT CANDIDATES TRY TO MAXIMIZE THEIR EXPOSURE TO THE PUBLIC. THE RESPECTIVE PARTY CAMPAIGNS ARE GENERALLY FOLLOWING ALREADY ESTABLISHED FORMATS AND STRATEGY, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOTED THAT U.P. ATTACKS AGAINST FORMER PRESIDENT EDUARDO FREI HAVE INCREASED IN MEASURABLE INTENSITY, PROBABLY REFLECTING U.P. FEARS THAT HE WILL OBTAIN CONSIDERABLE VOTER SUPPORT IN THE ELECTIONS. THE NATIONAL PARTY (PN) AND THE SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) HAVE BOTH APPEALED TO THE MORE CONVINCED SECTORS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE ELECTORATES; THE PN PROPAGANDA HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY UNCOMPROMISING OPPOSITION TO THE U.P. REGIME, WHILE THE PS PROPAGANDA HAS BEEN ORIENTED TOWARD CLASS STRUGGLE AND THE NEED TO RADICALIZE THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS IN CHILE. THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) IS DIRECTING ITS APPEAL TO THE CENTER LEFT AND THE MIDDLE CLASS WITH ITS THEME OF NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION, WHILE THE COMMUNIST

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PARTY OF CHILE (PCCH) IS STRESSING THE NEED TO AVOID CIVIL WAR IN CHILE BY AVOIDING A U.P. DEFEAT AT THE POLLS.

4. IN THE LATER PART OF THE CAMPAIGN, THERE HAS BEEN AN UPSURGE IN POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND INCREASED AGITATION BY THE EXTREMIST MOVEMENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT (MIR). ON 19 FEBRUARY ARMY GENERAL CARLOS P R A T S, MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, MET WITH THE LEADERS OF ALL MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES TO URGE THAT STEPS BE TAKEN TO REDUCE THE RATHER FREQUENT INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE. A "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT" WAS SUBSEQUENTLY REACHED, AND LARGELY ADHERED TO, TO DISCONTINUE THE PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES OF THE STREET BRIGADES OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES. ON 27 FEBRUARY GENERAL PRATS ATTEMPTED TO ARRANGE A SIMILAR AGREEMENT AMONG THE POLITICAL PARTY LEADERS TO REFRAIN FROM PUBLIC VICTORY DEMONSTRATIONS THE NIGHT OF 4 MARCH. HOWEVER, THESE EFFORTS WERE UNSUCCESSFUL, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE OF PS INTRANSIGENCE.

5. OTHER FORMS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE PERSIST AND HAVE INCREASED IN TEMPO. ON 23 FEBRUARY A GROUP OF MIR AND PS EXTREMISTS ATTACKED A GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE ATTEMPTING TO VERIFY THE EXISTENCE OF A LARGE SUPPLY OF COOKING OIL WHICH

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HAS BEEN STORED AT THE GRAHAM AGENCY WAREHOUSE. MIR ELEMENTS SUBSEQUENTLY SEIZED THE MAIN OFFICES OF THIS GOVERNMENT-INTERVENED DISTRIBUTION FIRM AND FORCED U.P. OFFICIALS TO NAME A NEW MANAGER. ALSO, LATE IN THE EVENING OF 26 FEBRUARY A GROUP OF APPROXIMATELY 500 U.P. SUPPORTERS, INCLUDING MIR MEMBERS, ATTACKED AND SEIZED TEMPORARILY A NATIONAL POLICE (CARABINERO) OUTPOST IN LLANQUIHUE TO PROTEST THE DETENTION OF A U.P. SUPPORTER. SEVERAL POLICE OFFICIALS WERE INJURED IN THE DISTURBANCES. INSTANCES OF TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST OPPOSITION CANDIDATES, INCLUDING SOME BY GUNFIRE, HAVE ALSO REPORTEDLY INCREASED, ESPECIALLY IN SOUTHERN CHILE. ON 27 FEBRUARY A GROUP OF OPPOSITION YOUTHS ATTACKED A SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS IN SANTIAGO AND REPORTEDLY INJURED SEVERAL PS MEMBERS WHO WERE PRESENT.

6. THE RECENT UPSURGE IN VIOLENCE, ESPECIALLY IF IT WERE TO CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE CAMPAIGN, COULD HAVE SOME IMPACT ON THE ELECTIONS, BUT IT IS NOT EXPECTED TO ALTER SIGNIFICANTLY VOTING PATTERNS, UNLESS OF COURSE VIOLENCE WERE INTENSIFIED AND CARRIED THROUGH ELECTION DAY.

7. SINCE THE ACQUISITION BY THE OPPOSITION OF A TWO-THIRDS

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MAJORITY IN CONGRESS IS ONLY REGARDED AS A REMOTE POSSIBILITY, AND SINCE THE OPPOSITION IS ASSURED OF MAINTAINING A SIMPLE CONGRESSIONAL MAJORITY, THE ELECTION OF THE ENTIRE 150-MEMBER CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AND HALF OF THE 50-MEMBER SENATE WILL RECEIVE LESS ATTENTION THAN THE PERCENTAGES OF THE POPULAR VOTE THE U.P. AND OPPOSITION WILL OBTAIN. THE U.P. WILL SEEK TO INTERPRET THE NATIONAL PERCENTAGES AS A CONTINUED MANDATE FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAMS, WHILE THE DEMOCRATIC CONFEDERATION (CODE) WILL ATTEMPT TO DEPICT THE RESULTS AS A REJECTION OF THE U.P. AND AS A DEMAND BY THE PEOPLE FOR A CHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES. AFTER THE ELECTIONS, AND DEPENDING UPON THE OUTCOME, THERE WILL PROBABLY BE LIBERAL USE OF NEWSPRINT BY BOTH SIDES TO INTERPRET WHAT IS "VICTORY" AND WHAT IS "DEFEAT." PRESIDENT ALLENDE HAS PUBLICLY STATED THAT HE BELIEVES ANYTHING IN EXCESS OF THE 36.6 PERCENT WHICH ELECTED HIM PRESIDENT WOULD BE A VICTORY AND THAT A U.P. TOTAL OF 40 PERCENT OF THE VOTE WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT VICTORY. THE OPPOSITION, BY POINTING TO THE 49.2 PERCENT OF THE VOTE OBTAINED BY THE U.P. IN THE 1971 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, WILL PROBABLY CONTENTEND THAT A 60 TO 40 PERCENT DIVISION WOULD BE A REJECTION OF THE U.P. GOVERNMENT.

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THUS, UNDER THIS OUTCOME BOTH SIDES WOULD BE CLAIMING VICTORY. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF OPPOSITION EXPECTATIONS, IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED THAT OPPOSITION POLITICAL LEADERS WOULD BE PRIVATELY DISAPPOINTED BY A 60-40 SPLIT IN THE VOTE.

8. ESTIMATES BY THE OPPOSITION PARTIES AS TO THE ELECTION OUTCOME CONTINUE TO REFLECT OPTIMISM AND CONFIDENCE. THE PDC BELIEVES THAT CODE IS CERTAIN TO OBTAIN 15 OF THE 25 SENATE SEATS BEING CONTESTED AND MAY WELL OBTAIN 16 SEATS. THE CHANCES OF ACHIEVING THE 17TH SEAT (AND THUS TWO-THIRDS OF THE UPPER HOUSE) IS VIEWED BY THE PDC AS REMOTE BUT STILL WITHIN THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY. THE PDC BELIEVES THAT CODE WILL ELECT AT LEAST 93 DEPUTIES AND HAS STRONG POSSIBILITIES TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL SEATS. THE PN IS ALSO CONFIDENT, ALTHOUGH PERHAPS SOMEWHAT LESS SO THAN THE PDC. PN LEADERS MAINTAIN THAT THEIR PARTY WILL INCREASE ITS CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION AND ESTIMATE THAT THE POPULAR VOTE PERCENTAGES WILL BE IN THE RANGE OF A 62 TO 38 DIVISION IN FAVOR OF THE OPPOSITION. ESTIMATES BY THE RADICAL PARTY OF THE LEFT (PIR) AND DEMOCRATIC RADICAL PARTY (PDR) LEADERS ARE ALSO IN THE RANGE OF A 62-64 TO 36-38 SPLIT IN THE NATIONAL VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE OPPOSITION.

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10. ON THE GOVERNMENT SIDE, THE PCCH ESTIMATES THAT THE U.P. WILL OBTAIN APPROXIMATELY 42 PERCENT OF THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE AND WILL ELECT 10 SENATORS AND 62 DEPUTIES. PRESIDENT ALLENDE, WHO EARLIER FELT THAT THE U.P. WOULD RECEIVE 38 OR 39 PERCENT, RECENTLY COMMENTED PRIVATELY THAT HE NOW EXPECTS THE GOVERNMENT PARTIES TO OBTAIN APPROXIMATELY 40 PERCENT. COMMENTS BY INDIVIDUAL PS LEADERS REFLECT ESTIMATES RANGING FROM 38 TO 45 PERCENT FOR THE U.P. PARTIES. TO ROUND OUT THE U.P. VARIATIONS, BOSCO PARRA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CHRISTIAN LEFT (IC), COMMENTED ON 26 FEBRUARY THAT THE DANGER OF AN OPPOSITION LANDSLIDE IN THE ELECTIONS IS VERY REAL AND THAT THE ATTAINMENT BY THE OPPOSITION OF A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN CONGRESS IS NO LONGER BEYOND THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY.

11. CHILEAN POLITICAL PARTY ESTIMATES AND ASSESSMENTS HAVE PROVEN TO BE INACCURATE FOR THE MOST PART IN THE PAST. INDIVIDUAL ESTIMATES BY POLITICAL PARTY LEADERS HAVE ALSO TRADITIONALLY REFLECTED A GREAT DEAL OF SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS AND WISHFUL THINKING. WHILE THE PCCH WAS EXTREMELY ACCURATE IN ITS PROGNOSSES ON THE 1970 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, IT TOO HAS BEEN

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GUILTY OF SOME EXCESS OPTIMISM IN ELECTIONS SUBSEQUENT TO THE 1970 CONTEST.

12. RECENTLY, U.P. CAMPAIGN FORTUNES AND STRATEGY HAVE NOT FARED WELL. THE GOVERNMENT'S DRIVE TO BLAME THE UPPER CLASS IN CHILE (AND THUS THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION) FOR HOARDING AND BLACK MARKET ACTIVITIES HAS BEEN SLOWED SOMEWHAT BY THE DISCOVERY, AND THE OPPOSITION'S SUBSEQUENT EXPLOITATION OF SUCH DISCOVERIES, OF STORES OF SCARCE FOOD ITEMS IN GOVERNMENT WAREHOUSES. ALSO, THE REPORTED STRATEGY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE VAST QUANTITIES OF SCARCE ITEMS DURING THE FINAL STAGES OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR ELECTORAL IMPACT HAS NOT MATERIALIZED.

WHILE THERE HAS BEEN SOME IMPROVEMENT IN THE AVAILABILITY OF FOOD AND RELATED ITEMS IN THE SANTIAGO AREA, IT IS NOT BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT TO MAKE ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. THE REASONS FOR THIS ARE PROBABLY VARIED, BUT THEY ARE BELIEVED TO INCLUDE GOVERNMENT INEFFICIENCY AND A RELUCTANCE BY PRIVATE PRODUCERS TO RELEASE THEIR GOODS PRIOR TO THE EXPECTED SHARP INCREASE IN RETAIL PRICES. THE GOVERNMENT'S SALARY READJUSTMENT BILL, WHICH WAS BELIEVED BY THE U.P. TO BE ANOTHER FACTOR FAVORABLE TO ITS ELECTION ASPIRATIONS, HAS BEEN STRONGLY

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CRITICIZED BY THE OPPOSITION AS BEING INADEQUATE, AND ELECTORAL GAIN FROM THIS MANEUVER HAS BEEN BLUNTED SOMEWHAT. THE DECISION BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (ANEP), ONE OF THE MAJOR TRADE UNIONS IN THE COUNTRY, TO REJECT THE PROPOSED BILL TENDS TO CREATE MORE CONFUSION AND ADVERSE PUBLICITY FOR THE GOVERNMENT BILL. THE RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES IN THE COST OF PURCHASING CAR LICENSE PLATES, EVEN FOR THE MORE ECONOMICAL VEHICLES IN CHILE, IS ANOTHER ISSUE WHICH HAS ALLOWED THE OPPOSITION THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEVERELY CRITICIZE THE GOVERNMENT.

13. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF IMPOUNDERABLES WHICH MAKE BOTH THE U.P. AND THE OPPOSITION ESTIMATES DIFFICULT TO ASSESS. FOR ONE THING, THERE ARE 746,976 NEW VOTERS (REPRESENTING ILLITERATES AND THOSE UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE) WHO ARE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME. THIS REPRESENTS 16.6 PERCENT OF THE REGISTERED ELECTORATE. THE VOTING PATTERN OF THE NEW VOTERS HAS NOT BEEN DETERMINED, BUT THERE MAY BE A GREATER PROPENSITY FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE ILLITERATES TO VOTE U.P. ALSO, WHILE THE LEVEL OF DISCONTENT OF THE COUNTRY OVER SHORTAGES AND INFLATION HAS BEEN CONFIRMED, THE EXTENT OF

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POSSIBLE EROSION OF U.P. ELECTORAL STRENGTH, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE LOWER ECONOMIC SECTORS OF THE COUNTRY, CANNOT BE ACCURATELY CALCULATED ON THE BASIS OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION. CONCEIVABLY, VOTER DISSATISFACTION WITH GOVERNMENT POLICIES COULD BE SO EXTENSIVE AS TO BRING ABOUT AN ELECTORAL VICTORY SURPASSING OPPOSITION ESTIMATES. NEVERTHELESS, IN VIEW OF THE IMPONDERABLES, IT IS JUDGED THAT A RANGE OF 62 TO 38 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE OPPOSITION, PLUS OR MINUS TWO PERCENT, WOULD BE A REASONED ESTIMATE BASED ON THE AVAILABLE DATA.

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